

# THE LONG GAME

NEWSLETTER OF THE  
GOLF SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA



No 51, DECEMBER 2014

## Doug Bachli Meeting at Victoria Golf Club

By Peter Gompertz



GSA Secretary Tony McLean presents Graeme Ryan with the Doug Bachli Trophy

*Thirty one members signed up to compete for the Doug Bachli trophy at Victoria, the day after the finish of the Australian Masters at Metropolitan, but inclement weather reduced the field to 25 hardy souls who ventured out in strong winds, heavy rain and the ever present danger of thunder and lightning.*

There should have been a prize for everyone who completed 18 holes, but for Graham Ryan, this years' winner, his 41 points appeared to indicate that he was just having a stroll in the park, and this despite three putting the 17th (cue cries of 'handbrake' from a couple of unruly members!). Mark Brasher in his first attempt on the Doug Bachli trophy returned a strong 37 off his low handicap, to be runner up. Lady's' champion is Heather Scales with 32 points on a count back from Grace Rew.

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Members at the recent Annual General Meeting

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### FOR THE DIARY

#### 16th February

Dinner at  
Commonwealth Golf Club

#### 16th March

Historians at  
Kingston Heath Golf Club

#### 19th April

Al Howard Memorial Trophy  
at Wagga Wagga Golf Club



*Continued from page 1:*

*Doug Bachli Meeting at Victoria Golf Club*



*Tony McLean presents the Doug Bachli Ladies medal to Heather Scales*

We were joined on the day by a keen hickory golfer, Andy Reistetter from the US, who returned a competent 36 points on his first attempt at the Victoria Golf Club layout. Andy has his own website [www.andygolfraveldiary.com](http://www.andygolfraveldiary.com) and is clearly very media savvy as well as being an enjoyable companion over a glass of red.

*A golf course exists primarily for match play, which is a sport, as distinguished from stroke play, which more resembles rifle shooting than a sport in that it lacks the joy of personal contact with an opponent.*

– Freddie Tait

## The First Golf Bag?

*(The late Daryl Cox left his golf memorabilia to the GSA, and among his papers were the following words with no indication of where, or when, they had been published. I would welcome some firm information, or educated guesses. Ed.)*

For many years prior to 1879 golf clubs were carried in the hand and under the arms, and it wasn't until about fifteen years after the founding of The North Devon & West of England Golf Club, now known as Royal Devon Golf Club, that a retired sailmaker, who was a clubhouse attendant, fabricated possibly the first golf bag out of canvas used for making sails. It was a crude container whose primary purpose was to protect the grips of the clubs from getting wet.

The early golf bags, to carry seldom more than 7 clubs, were simply long, thin, loose canvas cylinders, with a shoulder strap, which would concertina to the ground if not held properly. Gradually the canvas cylinder was improved with stiffeners made of split cane to prevent it from slumping. Near the turn of the century a more rigid bag was built around an iron frame with rings, at the top and the bottom, to keep the shape.

## NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to

Ian Dunn, Ray King and David Ryan

*“There is no shape nor size of body, no awkwardness, no ungainliness, which puts golf beyond ones reach. There are good golfers with one eye, with one leg, even one arm. None but the blind need despair”.*

– Sir Walter Simpson *‘The Art of Golf’*  
(circa 1890)

and today even blind people have their own Championships



# President's Report... 2014



*Geoff Vincent AM*  
President

*It is my pleasure to present the Presidents Report for the past year.*

We have had some 12 events during the year, including three dinners, where we have averaged around 60 members and guests at each function.

Our social events were a highlight this year, thanks to Virginia Gorrell.

We were delighted that Karen Lunn ( Executive Director ALPG ) could spare the time to address us at Metropolitan Golf Club in February during the Handa Australian Womens Open. In May, Jeff Blunden gave us an insight into the current state of modern golf at the Kingston Heath dinner, and Trevor Herden (Tournament Director Golf Australia) was our speaker at Royal Melbourne, outlining what is happening in the forthcoming international events this season in Australia.

Our thanks once again to our speakers who gave us their time.

For the past 10 years we have held meetings of golf historians, to enable members of various clubs to exchange ideas on items of history and how to preserve the traditions of the game. Our new Committee member Kim Hastie has handled this new convening task very well, with forums at Box Hill and Commonwealth golf clubs.

At Box Hill, we had great presentations from Ian Rowell (Riversdale) and Michael Church (Northern), while at Commonwealth, our guest presenters were Rick Wines, Virginia Gorell, and Martin Maguire.

The golf events held during the year were well attended including the Hickory Challenge at Kingston Heath during April, where a team of Society members competed against the Australian Golf Heritage Society from Sydney. Regrettably the visitors were victorious, and a return match is scheduled for March, or April, next year, in NSW. It is encouraging that several young members were keen to join us and take on the traditions of hickory golf.

This year we saw a new initiative with Paul Burgess starting a regular hickory day at Woodlands; that was extended by Ian Rennick at Kew, and Peter Gompertz at Long Island. These events are growing in interest at the various clubs.

I would also like to add our thanks to Max Findlay, and Cliff George, for their interest and passion with the restoration of our hickory clubs, and for the supply of clubs for our various events.

I would commend the hickory competition to members. Playing hickories can help your game using modern equipments, and it is good fun. Also the opportunity to play other clubs and meet the members from other clubs who have similar interests, is all worthwhile.

Other golf events were held at Kingston Heath, Woodlands, Royal Melbourne and Victoria golf clubs. I would again congratulate all the winners and thank all the golf clubs for allowing us to play their wonderful golf courses. We are always made to feel welcome and it is a privilege to play at these clubs.

I would now like to pay tribute to members of your Committee.

Tony McLean continues to be invaluable as our Secretary, and Peter Swan, as Treasurer has done a great job. Peter Gompertz produces *The Long Game* and endures the frustrations of organising the President, while Fiona Leggett maintains our web site and archival material. Virginia Gorrell looks after our social events extremely well, and Peter Swan also handles our merchandise. My thanks to Norie Macleod and Trevor Herden for their wise counsel. All have contributed their time, and efforts, which is greatly appreciated.

Regrettably we are losing several members from our committee as their terms of office come to an end.

We are sorry to farewell Paul Burgess, Norie Macleod and Peter Swan, and their contribution will be missed. Moira Drew has also decided to leave us this year; her work on archives and our web site will be hard to replace.

I would also like to mention the passing of our Past President, and Life Member, Daryl Cox, who died in July. Daryl was President of our Society from 1994 to 2000 and had a lengthy career in golf at Yarra Yarra, Commonwealth and the National.

As President I have enjoyed the past year and look forward to further development of Society affairs during the coming year.

*(The AGM was held at Victoria Golf Club on Monday 24th November 2014. Due to ill health our President, Geoff Vincent was unable to attend. Treasurer, Dick Kirby chaired the meeting and read the Presidents' Report. The Annual Accounts were approved by the members present. The President, Secretary and Treasurer were returned unopposed, as were retiring Committee members Virginia Gorrell and Peter Gompertz. Cliff George was elected to the committee. A visiting Hickory golfer, Andy Reistetter from the USA was made welcome. Ed.)*

# Golf Historians Forum Report

Commonwealth Golf Club October 13th, 2014

By Kim Hastie

*GSA President Geoff Vincent welcomed all to the meeting and thanked Commonwealth for hosting today.*

He spoke briefly about the role of the society and the value of forums such as this, and introduced Convenor of the meeting, Kim Hastie.

Virginia Gorrell, GSA Committee member, told the meeting about Commonwealth's GC early origins.

The club has a Heritage Committee thanks to the efforts of the late Mark Wade. Mark was passionate about the club's history and spent many hours in the State Library. He formed a small group of willing, and interested, members to gather many forms of information.

Commonwealth's early beginning can be traced back to sometime before 1914 when 6 holes were laid out in Carnegie where it was known as the Murrumbeena Golf Club.

The clubhouse was a weatherboard building built by the Waverley GC but in 1920 land was purchased in Warrigal Road, Commonwealth

GC was constituted, its' name being recognition of the contribution of the Commonwealth Armed Forces in the Great War; in 1921 construction started on a new building, completed in 1922 and extended in 1923. By 1927 the Committee decided that a large and more prestigious clubhouse, on the present site, was required. The foundation stone was laid in 1928 and the clubhouse officially opened by the Governor of Victoria, Lord Somers.

Substantial renovations in 1959 provided a new Pro shop, an improved bar area, office and committee rooms with the most recent renovations being carried out this year. Virginia encouraged her audience to venture downstairs to see a recently installed heritage display. She also suggested that participants view the stained glass windows, which are a feature of the Dining Room. The artist responsible for the design was William Whealdon of Brooks Robinson & Co of Melbourne.

Commonwealth GC and GSA member Marty Maguire talked about the two most influential golf professionals at the club.

Sam Bennett was one of the 'Carnoustie 300'; young professional golfers who left Carnoustie to take golf to the world. Sams' association with the club started in 1915 when he was appointed as the Pro and also laid out 12 holes with multiple tees to achieve 18 holes. Sam was succeeded in 1924 by Jock Young who stayed until his retirement in 1961, having been inducted as a Life Member in 1956. Jock was an outstanding player, respected teacher, architect, club maker and golf writer.

Marty also spoke about the early designs of the course, Bill Edgars 18 holes sketches and the implementation of some of Harry Colts suggestions. Also, apparently in 1926, Dr Alister MacKenzie visited Melbourne and made a few suggestions about improvements to the course but his offer of more design work was not taken up.

Like most golf clubs in the Melbourne area the condition of the course suffered a bit during the Great Depression and World 2 and membership declined but post war both have improved.



Virginia Gorrell



Marty Maguire



Rick Wines



The next speaker was a Commonwealth Life Member, Rick Wines, a long term Pennant player and Pennant Captain for 20 years during which the Pennant was won 4 times. Rick was also Vic Amateur in 1975 and represented Victoria many times in interstate matches' Rick was also Club President from 1998 to 2000 and was made a Life Member in 2002. Rick then gave us, without any notes, a very personal and comprehensive account of the strategic course layout changes since he joined the club in 1921. In conclusion he told the meeting of a unique set of hickory clubs made by T Kane on display downstairs that we should have a look at.

Peter Gompertz has been a member of the 'British Golf Collectors Society' since 1987, served for 3 years on the BGCS Committee and was founding Honorary Curator of the 'Open Museum' at Royal North Devon Golf Club. He is now a Committee Member of the GSA, Editor of *The Long Game*, and was a Director of Long Island GC for three years.

Peter gave an entertaining insight in to how he became a passionate, and lifelong collector, of golf books.

He also suggested a short list of books that golf historians should have on their bookshelf. Peter had some of his personal copies with him from what we think is a vast collection.

- *A Round of Golf with Tommy Armour* - course play management

- *Golf Collectors Price Guide* by John Taylor - with a 'tongue in cheek' suggestion about how useful golf instruction books are.
- *Golf in the Making* by Ian Henderson & David Stirk - a must for historians interested in club development
- *Badminton Library 'Golf'* by Horace Hutchinson

Plus some modern favourites:

- *To The Linksland* by Michael Bamberger
- *Four Iron in the Soul* by Lawrence Donegan. A book Peter recommends if you have a particular interest in caddying, as he does.

The best book about early golf in Australia, and probably the most expensive, is *The Australian Golfer* by Dan Soutar.

Peter suggested when beginning a collection to always start with your clubs' history. For more information or the current value of a book you have, advice can be obtained by going to [www.abe.com](http://www.abe.com) and putting in the title of the book and the name of the author. There are a couple of big golf memorabilia auctions coming up in November for more information Contact Peter at [peter@antiquebroker.com.au](mailto:peter@antiquebroker.com.au)

Max Findlay gave us a brief talk on the components, and the making, of a hickory club and with Cliff George, discussed materials, methods and costs of grip wrapping.

Cliff tabled a document, he helped develop, setting down the compliance guidelines which have now been adopted by GSA. He is passionate about hickory restoration and strongly believes in preserving the charm of playing antique Hickory Golf. Cliff went through a number of the rules and reasons for putting them in place. He strongly believes the key to hickory collecting is the identification of them.

Historians are invited to bring along any old golf clubs, golf memorabilia or books for assessment and comment.

Ray King from Greenacres brought along a small golf case with wooden stand for appraisal. We understand it is a Bussey patent "Stand up "Caddy. Moira Drew (RMGC archivist & GSA member) was asked assist with further identification and dating.

Several hickory clubs were passed to Cliff for his appraisal, one from Di Greenhill and a particularly interesting club from Marty Maguire.

Geoff Vincent then proposed a vote of thanks to Commonwealth GC for their hospitality.

Approximately 10 players went out for a hit with hickories.

Unfortunately the weather turned nasty and only a few holes were played.

We thank Max Findlay who provided several sets for use.



*Historians audience*

# History of a Golf Organisation Without a Golf Course

By Colin White, Keysborough Golf Club

*Apart from our recognised Golf Clubs, Golf Australia and State bodies, Professional Golf etc, looking after the great international game, many other disparate bodies enjoy organized Golf both social and Club.*

For example, many State Railway Institutes have existed for more than a century and some ninety years ago, the Victorian and New South bodies began what has now become the Australian and New Zealand Railway Institutes Golf Union.

From a humble beginning in 1925 with two small state teams travelling (by train) to a central location and interstate competition at Wagga Wagga NSW, to the most recent competition at Penrith NSW in 2013, where teams of players from New Zealand and each Australian mainland state enjoyed eight days of golf on different courses over two weeks, the game and social interaction has increased enormously.

In 1926 play was in Sydney, at Bonnie Doon and Long Reef. In 1927 South Australia joined in and the state teams competed at Riverdale Links SA. Format was nine man teams over three days play, three ball games, split six scoring system. Results, Vic 392, NSW 316, SA 264.

1928 the three states returned to NSW and competed at Woollongong, Cronulla Long Reef and Bonnie Doon – Vic won again. Wine firm Hardy's presented trophies to the teams and created a perpetual cup, the "Tintara Cup" which to this day is the major team event.

1929–1932 were depression years and competition resumed in a smaller way in 1932 in Melbourne, then Sydney in 33 and 34. Affiliation fees were one pound per player, five shillings daily golf, accommodation at the old Hotel Sydney at seven shillings per night, bed and breakfast.

Annual competition continued between the three states until 1939 but ceased during World War Two.

Competition resumed in 1949 on a bi-annual basis, including Queensland players for the first time, and as a two week golfing "Carnival" alternating between the participating systems.

From 1951 Western Australia joined in, and in 1955 with the carnival hosted in Brisbane a special train carried players and partners from Sydney to Brisbane.

Play there was at Indooroopilly, Keperra, Gables, Brisbane and Virginia.

1959 Victoria hosted the other four state teams at Kingswood, Yarra Yarra, Kingston Heath, Victoria and Commonwealth.

In 1965 the Commonwealth Railways entered a team and in 1969 Tasmania and New Zealand teams joined at Melbourne, playing at Kingswood, Yarra Yarra, Kingston Heath, Victoria, Keysborough, Rosedale, Metropolitan and Commonwealth - a busy two weeks of golf.

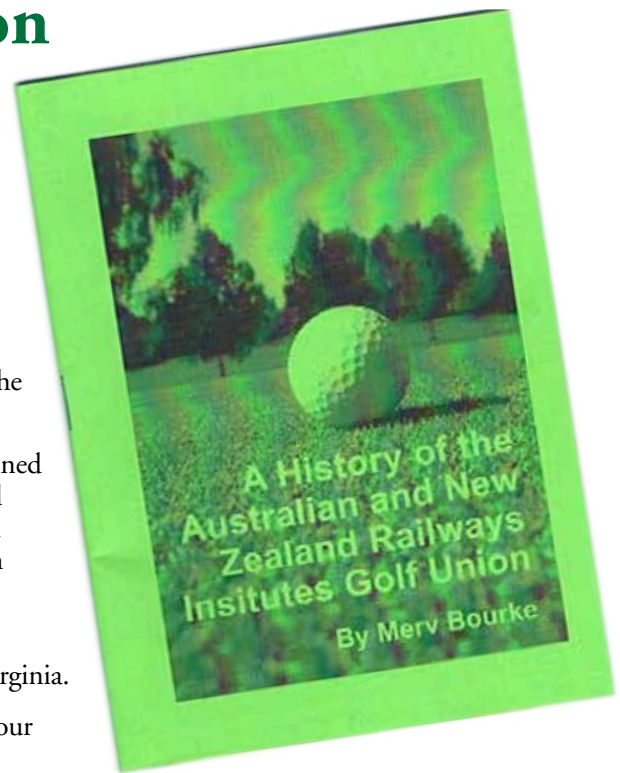
1973 all teams competed in Hobart for the first time, in 1975 at Canberra and in 1979 at Rotorua NZ, first overseas travel.

In 1985 Commonwealth, South Australia and Tasmania became Australian National Railways and the bi-annual rotation continued, Auckland NZ in 1991, Christchurch in 2003 and Wellington in 2015.

Other than state capitals, Carnival venues have been – in the Riverland SA, Gold Coast QLD and Penrith NSW, with states hosting the Carnival at twelve year intervals.

From 1999 at the Melbourne Carnival Ladies were able to participate in separate competition rather than as member of the state team.

Competition formats have varied over the years, other than Gross and Nett and grade Champion events, from 1976 state teams are made up from the better 14 players from each system, eleven person teams named each day best eight scores to count, gross and nett over 54 holes.



Previously most competition was knock out match play. Of course we throw in Stableford, Par, Ambrose and Four Ball to fill out a Carnival programme.

In addition to keenly contested golf events Carnivals are very social occasions. Meeting friends at two year intervals means much catching up and conviviality, despite the internet. Non golfers attending have daily tourist activity arranged in each venue, tours, shopping, theatres, casino visits etc, whilst on Sunday non golf days host states arrange events. Perth - tour of Swan River wineries. Penrith - Nepean River cruise and dining. Sydney - Harbour cruise and Lane Cove River dining. Melbourne - Healesville Sanctuary one year, another year Werribee Park Mansion dining and the Open Range Zoo. Berri SA (Riverland) Murray River cruise to Renmark. Auckland - Haka and Maori Festival and dining. Christchurch - Trans Island train tour over Arthur's Pass to Greymouth on the west coast, all including sumptuous dining etc.

Having participated in fifteen Carnivals over thirty years, each state and New Zealand, you gain a real appreciation of the variety and beauty of the golfing venues available, the many changes of terrain and climate which affect golf courses, and of course of the many and varied characters who play and administer golf and Clubs and competitions.



# Claytons' Corner

with Michael Clayton

*Sure to be much discussed in the near future is Golf Victoria's decision to allow professionals, who are members of clubs, to play Pennant golf in 2015.*

Pennant has been a world-class inter-club competition for over a century and for much of the time was a competition amongst the best players in the state. Few would argue this is the case anymore as our best players including Geoff Ogilvy, Stuart Appleby, Aaron Baddeley, Marc Leishman, Robert Allenby, Richard Green, Marcus Fraser, Nathan Holman and Matt Griffin are all playing professional golf. All were tremendous Pennant players, but in an era long past so many of our best players were career amateurs and long-time distinguished Pennant players. Ossie Pickworth, Jack Harris, Geoff Parslow were obviously first class players and Peter Thomson was on another level altogether; but men like Kevin Hartley, Doug Bachli, Tom Crow, Eric Routley, Bill Edgar, Randall Hicks, Don Reiter and Peter Sweeney were wonderful players who in this era might all have taken a shot at playing the tour.

Things began to change in the late 1970s. I won the Australian Amateur in 1978 and previously six men – Jim Ferrier, Bruce Devlin, Ted Ball, Bob Shearer, Bill Britten and Terry Gale – had gone down the professional path. Since 1978 every single player who won the Amateur has turned pro. It was nothing to do with me. Rather, the nature of the game fundamentally changed.

There was money to be made and, unsurprisingly, the better players chose to play the tour and one consequence was Pennant ceased to be what it had traditionally been for at least three quarters of a century.

More recently golf clubs have admitted professionals as members and that has been a welcome advance. It was silly, at best discriminatory at worst, that men who had been deemed perfectly acceptable members were precluded from continuing as members simply because they had changed their job.

The issue of pros playing Pennant whilst perhaps controversial, is one sure way to raise the standard of the competition. It exposes younger players to older and more experienced golfers who are not only hard to beat but tremendous, and generous, sources of advice. Hartley, Edgar, Reiter and John Lindsay were more than generous to those of us who came behind, and the strength of the game here has always been dependent on the passing down of knowledge. Norman Von Nida started the tradition, and it continues to this day.

Some time in the next four or five years Geoff Ogilvy will be living back in Melbourne, and as a member at Victoria he will be able to play Pennant matches.

Is anyone suggesting that young players like Ryan Ruffels, Todd Sinnott or Lucas Herbert wouldn't benefit from playing a big match against a U.S. Open champion? and someone universally acknowledged as one of the wisest and most articulate players in the game? There is only one possible answer to the question.

Finally, is it surely nothing but a compliment to the competition that men like Fraser, Griffin, Anthony Brown, Daniel Popovic, and Nathan Holman are genuinely excited to play, and continue their relationship with their clubs and the interclub competition. Surely it can only be a good thing for the competition that younger players have a chance to measure their game and their progress against some of the best players in the country.

It is a good thing that the best players in Victoria will play together again with more regularity. Years ago The Close Championship was one opportunity to play with better pros, as were the Open events at Woodlands, Yarra Yarra, Heidelberg and Eastwood. All have disappeared and it has been to the detriment of the golfing calendar.

Some suggest the pros will keep players out of teams. They will. Just as Hartley, Crow, Devlin, Routley and Bachli kept good players out of teams decades ago.

There is one universal answer to that question, and it has always been the same.

Play better.

## Pace of Play

By Peter Gompertz

*In 1965 the magazine Golf Digest launched its' first campaign against slow play on the golf course. Last year the USGA announced its 'pace of play initiative'.*

Between these two events, in an attempt to improve the pace of play, Arnold Palmer drew up a list of '10 rules for good golf etiquette', Golf Australia has recently announced that it has joined with the R&A promoting a survey of slow play with a questionnaire that takes only 5 minutes to complete. Apparently in the past several years 5 million golfers have ceased playing golf. A recent survey by The Golf Club Secretary journal of over 1,500 golfers, around the world, found that 95% of respondents were concerned about slow play. The Fine Golf website, promoter of 'the running game' has joined forces with The Campaign for Real Golf helping to run a days golf at The Temple Golf Club near Henley in the UK, playing with golf balls whose optimum distance has been reduced by 15%. Additionally Temple GC is a course which has not lengthened its holes to accommodate longer ball flight, so that members walk a very short distance across, rather than back, to the next tee. Considerable time saving has resulted. This golf was day was the initiative of The Recreational, Enjoyable, Affordable. Less-Time – Consuming campaign for Real golf (REAL). Does your club have a problem with slow play? If so, what is your Committee doing about it?



*Contestants gather at Kingston Heath*



*Men's Champion Peter Stickley*



*Ladies Champion Jean Gilbert*

## Hickories at Kingston Heath

*By Peter Gompertz*

*Due to a clash with our annual hickories match against the Australian Golf Heritage Society the day for the Frank Shepherd/Burtta Cheney Trophies was held over until a bright, and sunny, spring day in late October.*

Because the Asian Amateur Championship was being held at Royal Melbourne, Kingston Heaths fairways were a little crowded with displaced golfers, so this years Hickory Championship was played over the back 9 of our host club. Although it was a fine day without much wind the scores revealed that perhaps the back 9 at 'The Heath' is the more difficult 9.

Winner of the Frank Shepherd Trophy was, first time contestant, Peter Stickley with 14 points and the winner of the Burtta Cheney Trophy was Jean Gilbert with a brave 10 points. Longest drive, on the 18th, was won by Marty Maguire, and nearest the pin on the 15th ( best par 3 hole in Australia according to some ) was none other than our President, Geoff Vincent, but everybody who took part had a great day and some sort of story to tell. Hope to see more members competing next year, after monthly practice with the Hickory Heroes.

*The Golf Society of Australia was formed in 1982 to research and preserve the history of golf in Australia. As part of this role, the Society manages the Museum and Library for Golf Australia. Golf Australia supports the Society by providing office space and administrative assistance.*